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MAYOR

City of Charleston
South Carolina

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PUBLIC INFORMATION

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Annual MOJA Arts Festival Opens This Week

CHARLESTON, S.C.—In its 26th season, the MOJA African-American and Caribbean Arts Festival runs Sept. 24 through Oct. 4, 2009 offering a variety of arts and cultural programs, including theatre, dance, literary, visual arts, jazz, gospel, reggae, chamber music as well as many free, family-friendly events.

“MOJA once again lives up to its mission of building bridges of understanding and friendship through its myriad cultural offerings,” says Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. “MOJA, a Swahili word meaning ‘One,’ inspires all who come to the festival and allows us to celebrate the strong bonds of our culture, our heritage and our connection as one human family.”

The 2009 poster image, *Rejoice* by Doyle William Cloyd, actively captures the spirit of the varied disciplines presented at the 2009 MOJA Arts Festival. A native of the West side of Chicago, Ill., his art captures reflections of urban life and afro-centricity with a distinguished style and broad range of images. By exploring his creativity, he developed a unique style of abstractions with tremendous depth and presence.

2009 MOJA Festival Highlights:

Art Forms & Theatre Concepts, Inc. the premiere African-American Theatre Company of the Lowcountry brings the 70s golden age of black TV sitcoms to the stage with its revival of Don Evans's *One Monkey Don't Stop No Show*. Carlie Town Productions will also present the Gullah/Geechee play, *Dairy Frum De Neck Gullah/Geechee Matriarch*.

National recording jazz artist **Lalah Hathaway** performs Sept. 26 at 7:30 p.m. in the picturesque, cabaret setting of the College of Charleston Cistern Yard with Charleston artists, Charlton Singleton, trumpet and Daniel Davis, violin. Students with an ID can purchase tickets on-site for a special price of \$20.

Sunday, Sept. 27 at 7:30, nationally acclaimed chamber musicians, Kenneth Law, Professor of Cello at Converse College, Spartanburg, S.C. and pianist Stephen Buck from New York join together for a Classical Encounters concert. They will perform works by Piazzolla, Faure and Rubinstein in the beautiful setting of the City Gallery at Waterfront Park overlooking the Charleston harbor.

Gospel Divas, **LynnMarie Boone, Joy Pryor, and Gwendolyn Rodgers** and the Men of

Gospel, **Rev. Randolph Miller, Anthony Burke and Mario Dessasure** come together for an unforgettable night of Gospel Sept. 27 at 4 p.m. for **“A Back Home Gospel Hour”** concert. Joining the ensemble are **Javetta Campbell** and **Martha Rhoades** with a special appearance by **Minster Herbert Beard**.

Atlanta’s first and only black ballet company, **Ballethnic Dance Company**, returns to MOJA and takes the stage at the Gaillard Municipal Auditorium Oct. 2 at 7:30 p.m.

R&B legends, **The O’Jays**, presented by The MEHD Group, perform at the Family Circle Tennis Center Oct. 3 at 7:30 p.m.

Special Recognitions:

Each year, MOJA honors outstanding community leaders for their contributions to the quality of life and community service. 2009 is the year for recognizing the men whose shoulders we stand for their significant contributions to the quality of life in Charleston. The **“Standing on the Shoulders of our Elders” Special Recognition Brunch** is Sept. 29 at 11 a.m. Also this year, Oct. 3 marks the 16th annual **Community Tribute Luncheon**, honoring individuals who have completed outstanding community service. Held at Lowndes Grove Plantation at 11:30 a.m., advanced reservations are required for these events.

Free Event Highlights:

September 24 at 6 p.m. marks the 2009 MOJA Arts Festival **Opening Reception**. A free event held at the Charleston Museum, guests can meet the **2009 MOJA Poster Artist, Doyle Cloyd** and enjoy Caribbean cuisine prepared by Joe’s Catering.

Celebrate the official start of MOJA with the annual **Caribbean Street Parade and Opening Ceremonies**. The parade features students from many Charleston County Schools, African drummers and dancers, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and members of civic organizations. The parade, starting at 5:30 p.m., winds through the streets of Charleston, culminating behind the U.S. Custom House, the site of the Opening Ceremonies at 6:15 p.m. and Reggae Block Dance.

Following the Opening Ceremonies behind the U.S. Custom House, the **Reggae Block Dance** starts at 6:30 p.m. with live bands, African drummers and dancers, ethnic foods and international crafts. Featured Bands include **DisNDat Caribbean Band, and De Lions of Jah Reggae Band**.

Heritage Day, Sept. 26, showcases local and regional talent, African, African-American and Caribbean vendors, ethnic foods, international crafts, storytelling and Swahili workshops. In Hampton Park from 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., additional activities include Celebrate the Family Expo, Health and Wellness Fair and Youth on View, featuring step teams from across the Lowcountry.

Each year, the MOJA Festival recognizes buildings for their historical significance to the African-American experience with the **Historic Site Designation**. The 2009 recipient of this

recognition is Centenary United Methodist Church located at 60 Wentworth St. The designation is Sept. 30 at 10 a.m.

As the 2009 MOJA Festival comes to a conclusion, Charleston residents and visitors are invited to the free **Finale** in Hampton Park starting at 4 p.m. Oct. 4. Fun for the entire family, the exciting Finale line up features Caribbean steel, **Tropical Steel Vibes**, smooth jazz, **ITISSO Music Group**, and salsa, **Orquestra Mayor**. The Finale also features African, African-American and Caribbean craft vendors, ethnic foods and much more.

Admission Free Visual Arts Highlights:

Premiering at MOJA, the City Gallery at Waterfront Park presents *Jonathan Green and Protégés*. The exhibit features 25 of Green's original paintings along with two-dimensional and three-dimensional works by four young rising stars of the visual arts world that Green mentors: Jean Dornevil, Ryenier Llanes, Willie Leftwich and Juan Diaz. On view for the duration of the MOJA Arts Festival, the exhibit runs Sept. 12 to Oct. 4, 2009 and is open Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday, Noon to 5 p.m.

"I, Too, America" is the 2009 MOJA invitational exhibit at the Gaillard Auditorium, on display from Sept. 24 to Oct. 30. The show features five dynamic women who offer their inspired visual interpretations of Langston Hughes' 1925 poem entitled "I, Too." The opening line of the poem is "I, too, sing America." It speaks to shared yet diverse heritages and is an unabashed call to the patriotism and the promise of inclusion that the American dream symbolizes. The artists are: Marty Biernbaum, KTC/Karole Turner Campbell, Arianne King Comer, Andrea Hazel Jacqueline Johnson.

The 2009 MOJA Juried Art Exhibition and Reception is Sept. 20 at 5:30 at the Avery Research Center for African-American History and Culture. The show honors works in all media by South Carolina and Regional Artists. Artists selected to participate in this year's exhibition are Edward Jobst Andrews, Denise Athanas, Bill Blizard, Audrey Layne Combs, Johnnie H. Cowan, Lucy Elliott, Lynda English, Latasha R. Hollins, Lori Starnes Isom, Pat Keown, Kim Lucia, Dorothy Montgomery, Hampton R. Olfus, Jr., Lucretia Pope, Edward Shmunes, Charles Staats, James E. St. Clair, Nancy Van Buren, and Jaclyn Wukela. Cash awards will be given for first, second, third place, and three ribbons for honorable mentions.

Other free visual art exhibitions include: *Addelle Sanders Invitational Art Exhibition: Multi-Cultural Reflexes the Style of African-American Culture*, in the New Perspectives Gallery at 180 Meeting St., 2nd floor from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sept. 24 to Oct. 30; *Out of Africa*, at Lowcountry Artists Ltd., located at 148 East Bay St. from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 1 to 31; *Junior-Senior Community Art Exhibition* at Joseph Floyd Manor, 2106 Mt. Pleasant St., 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Oct. 3.

And much more, including **Gullah tours, jazz cruises, gospel concerts, poetry readings and educational outreach projects.**

Nearly half of MOJA's events are admission-free and the remainder are offered at very modest ticket prices, ranging from \$5 to \$35. **Tickets** may be purchased by calling Ticketmaster at 800-745-3000, or online at www.TicketMaster.com. Tickets may also be purchased at the MOJA box office, located in the Gaillard Municipal Auditorium at 77

Calhoun St., with no service charges. For a ticket brochure and information on MOJA, call the City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs at (843) 724-7305 or visit www.MOJAFestival.com.

The MOJA Arts Festival is a multi-disciplinary festival produced and directed by the City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the MOJA Planning Committee, a community arts and cultural group and the MOJA Advisory Board, a group of civic leaders who assist with fundraising and advocacy. MOJA, a Swahili word meaning "One," is the appropriate name for this festival celebration of harmony amongst all people in our community. The Festival highlights the many African-American and Caribbean contributions to western and world cultures. MOJA's wide range of events include visual arts, classical music, dance, gospel, jazz, poetry, R&B music, storytelling, theatre, children's activities, traditional crafts, ethnic food, and much, much more. In addition to its myriad arts presentations, MOJA also includes an active and busy educational outreach component of workshops in the public schools and senior outreach in senior citizen homes.

MOJA is grateful to the following foundations, corporations, individuals and government entities for their support of the 2009 MOJA Arts Festival:

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Editor's Note: High res images available upon request

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